

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMCONSUL ZAGREB
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INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

C O N F I D E N T I A L ZAGREB 239

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PINR, YO
SUBJECT: MORE ON LEADERSHIP DOINGS

REF: BELGRADE 1559 AND 1524

1. SELECTION OF DJURANOVIC AS PRESIDENT OF THE FEDERAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL - SLOVENIAN PRESIDENT SERGEJ KRAJGER TOLD THE CONSUL GENERAL AT MARCH 15 CONSULAR CORPS LUNCHEON IN HONOR OF SLOVENIAN GOVERNMENT THAT WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE NEW PRESIDENT VESELIN DJURANOVIC, ALL THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE FEDERAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL (FEC) WILL REMAIN IN OFF CE UNTIL THEIR TERM ENDS IN MAY 1978. KRAJGER SAID THAT DJURANOVIC WILL CONTINUE AS PRESIDENT OF THE FEC FOR ANOTHER FOUR-YEAR TERM.

2. IN EXPLAINING THE SELECTION OF DJURANOVIC AS PRESIDENT OF THE FEC, KRAJGER SAID THAT PREVIOUS PRESIDENTS HAD COME FROM BOSNIA, CROATIA, SERBIA, AND SLOVENIA. IT WAS NOW THE TURN OF EITHER MACEDONIA OR MONTENEGRO. SINCE A MACEDONIAN IS NOW HEAD OF THE FEDERAL ASSEMBLY (GLIGOROV) "TITO, KARDELJ, AND DOLANC" HAD CHOSEN A MONTENEGRIN--DJURANOVIC. AFTER DJURANOVIC HAD BEEN SELECTED BY THIS SMALL INNER GROUP, HIS NAME WAS THEN PROPOSED TO A LARGER BODY BRINGING TOGETHER LEADERS OF ALL THE CONSTITUENT REPUBLICS. IN THE PAST FEW WEEKS, DJURANOVIC HAS PERSONALLY VISITED EACH OF THE
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REPUBLICS OF YUGOSLAVIA.

3. BAKARIC AND BILIC - WE FIND IT INDEED SURPRISING THAT TITO HAD NOT SENT A CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE TO BAKARIC ON HIS 65TH BIRTHDAY ON MARCH 7. THE ZAGREB PRESS HAD REPORTED OTHER MESSAGES TO BAKARIC, INCLUDING ONE FROM DOLANC ON BEHALF OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE PRESIDENCY OF YUGOSLAVIA. THE ABSENCE OF A TITO MESSAGE MIGHT

WELL REFLECT A COOLING BETWEEN TITO AND BAKARIC RELATING TO REPORTED DIFFERENCES BETWEEN DOLANC AND BILIC. WELL PLACED PARTY SOURCES IN ZAGREB HAVE LED US TO BELIEVE THAT THE POSITIONS TAKEN BY BILIC SHOULD NOT BE REGARDED AS THOSE OF BILIC ALONE. ON THE OTHER HAND IT IS HARDLY LIKELY THAT TITO, KARDELJ AND DOLANC WOULD AT THIS TIME, WANT TO HAVE A DIRECT CONFRONTATION WITH THE ACKNOWLEDGED LEADER OF CROATIA. BAKARIC IS STILL THE STRONG MAN OF CROATIA AND NONE OF THE OTHER CROATIAN LEADERS, INCLUDING BILIC, IS LIKELY TO TAKE POSITIONS WHICH DIFFER SHARPLY FROM THOSE HELD BY BAKARIC. BAKARIC IS AN OLD POLITICAL HAND WHO HAS WEATHERED MANY POLITICAL STORMS SINCE WORLD WAR II. WHILE IT IS TRUE THAT BAKARIC IS A SICK MAN, AS HE HIMSELF ACKNOWLEDGED IN HIS MARCH 12 INTERVIEW WITH POLITIKA EXPRES, HE HAS IF ANYTHING BEEN SEEN TO BE MORE ACTIVE RECENTLY THAN BEFORE. KAISER

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